

# Visualizing a savings goal

Students create a savings progress chart to help them illustrate a savings plan, manage their savings process, and help them reach their financial goals.

## Learning goals

### Big idea

Having a savings plan can lead to habits and choices that help you reach your financial and personal goals.

### Essential questions

- What are some types of financial goals?
- How can a progress chart help you reach your financial goals?

### Objectives




- Understand the difference between short-term and long-term goals
- Create a savings progress chart for personal financial goals

### What students will do

- Explore the differences between short-term and long-term goals.
- Make a list of personal short- and long-term goals.
- Create a savings chart to help them track their progress toward a financial goal they set.

#### KEY INFORMATION

Building block:

-  Executive function
-  Financial habits and norms
-  Financial knowledge and decision-making skills

Grade level: Middle school (6–8)

Age range: 11–14

Topic: Save and invest (Saving for long-term goals, Saving for short-term goals)

School subject: CTE (Career and technical education), Fine arts and performing arts

Teaching strategy: Direct instruction, Project-based learning

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Understand, Apply, Create

Activity duration: 45–60 minutes

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#### STANDARDS

Council for Economic Education  
Standard III. Saving

Jump\$tart Coalition  
Spending and saving - Standard 1

## Preparing for this activity

- ☐ While it's not necessary, completing the "Contrasting long-term and short-term savings goals" and "Saving for unexpected events" activities may make this one more meaningful.
- ☐ Print copies of all student materials for each student, or prepare for students to access them electronically.
- ☐ Collect paper and art supplies to distribute to each student.

### What you'll need

#### THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- Visualizing a savings goal (guide)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_visualizing-savings-goal\\_guide.pdf](#)

#### STUDENT MATERIALS

- Visualizing a savings goal (worksheet)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_visualizing-savings-goal\\_worksheet.pdf](#)
- Paper and art supplies

## Exploring key financial concepts

Every person or family has a different idea of the future they want to build. Some of their ideas are focused on the next few weeks or months, while other ideas are long term. What do you want for yourself in the near future? What do you want to see in the next few years? These ideas about your future are your hopes, wants, and dreams. People often put off saving for large purchases or significant life events because they feel like they don't have enough money to save or they're struggling to make ends meet today. But not planning for or saving for these things may mean that they don't happen. One of the best ways to achieve your financial goals is to start small. People often find that just putting aside some money – even if it's a small amount like \$5 or \$10 a week – is a good place to start. Whether your savings goal is short term or long term, it's helpful to visualize it. Creating a savings progress chart will help you track your achievements and encourage you to save more.

#### **TIP**

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Because savings products, terms, and laws change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

## Teaching this activity

### Whole-class introduction

- Explain the difference between short- and long-term goals by reviewing the following definitions with them:
  - **Long-term goals:** Goals that can take more than five years to achieve.
  - **Short-term goals:** Goals that can take a short time, or up to five years, to reach.
- Ask the students to name short- and long-term goals that they might have and write them on the board.
- Be sure students understand other key vocabulary:
  - **Budget:** A plan that outlines what money you expect to earn or receive (your income) and how you will save it or spend it (your expenses) for a given period of time; also called a spending plan.
  - **Savings:** Money you have set aside in a secure place, such as in a bank account, that you can use for future emergencies or to make specific purchases.
  - **Savings account:** An account at a bank (sometimes called a share savings account at a credit union) used to set aside money and that pays you interest.

#### TIP

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Visit CFPB's financial education glossary at [consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/](https://consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/).

### Individual work

- Distribute the "Visualizing a savings goal" worksheet.
- Review the sample savings goals on the worksheet with them.
  - Ask students to decide whether Tyrone's and Uma's goals are short term or long term and mark the answers on their worksheet.
  - Explain that in those examples, Tyrone and Uma would color or mark off how far they've gotten as a visual reminder of their financial progress.
  - Ask the students to color in the progress Tyrone and Uma have made toward their goals.
- Ask students to think of two short-term and two long-term savings goals that they'd like to achieve and list them on their worksheet.
- Explain that each student will pick one of the goals they listed and create their own savings progress chart for that goal.

- Distribute paper and art supplies to the students.
- Students will then draw a picture to represent that goal on their blank sheet of paper and create a savings progress chart.
  - Students can draw any type of chart they like as long as it shows increments that can be used to track their progress.
- When students are finished with their charts, they'll answer the reflection questions on the worksheet.
- Use students' responses to the reflection questions as an opportunity to explore these concepts in greater depth.

## Wrap-up

Bring the class back together and ask for volunteers to share their goals and progress charts with the class.

## Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other CFPB activities that address the topic of saving, including saving for long-term or short-term goals.

## Measuring student learning

Students' progress charts will give you a sense of their understanding of savings goals.

This answer guide provides possible answers for the "Visualizing a savings goal" worksheet.

**Keep in mind that students' goals and answers to reflection questions will vary, since there is not only one right answer.** In addition, what one student may see as a long-term goal, another student may see as a short-term goal. The important thing is for students to have reasonable justifications for their answers.

## Answer guide

### Savings scenarios

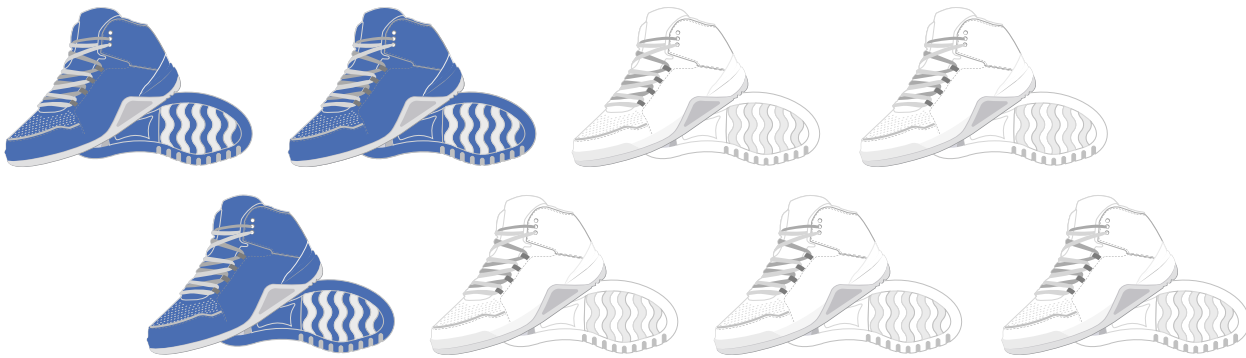
#### Tyrone's goal: New shoes

Tyrone wants to save for a new pair of shoes. The shoes he wants cost about \$70 with tax.

This is a (check one): ☐ short-term goal ☐ long-term goal

**Answers will vary.**

Below is his savings chart. So far, he's saved \$30. Each pair of shoes represents \$10 he's saved. Color in the correct number of pairs of shoes to show how close Tyrone is reaching his goal.



#### Uma's goal: Driver's education class

Uma is saving money so she can take a driver's education class. The class costs \$320.

This is a (check one): ☐ short-term goal ☐ long-term goal

**Answers will vary.**

So far, she's saved \$80. Color in the progress she's made toward her goal.

